Abstract of the Disclosure

A video retrieval system is presented that allows a user to quickly and easily select and receive stories of interest from a video stream. The video retrieval system classifies stories and delivers samples of selected stories that match each user's current preference. The user's preferences may include particular broadcast networks, persons, story topics, keywords, and the like. Key frames of each selected story are sequentially displayed; when the user views a frame of interest, the user selects the story that is associated with the key frame for more detailed viewing. This invention is particularly well suited for targeted news retrieval. In a preferred embodiment, news stories are stored, and the selection of a news story for detailed viewing based on the associated key frames effects a playback of the selected news story. The principles of this invention also allows a user to effect a directed search of other types of broadcasts as well. For example, the user may initiate an automated scan that presents samples of broadcasts that conform to the user's current preferences, akin to directed channel-surfing.